

# Red line drawn for resigning officials

The country's top personnel authorities and relevant State agencies have jointly issued a document stipulating that civil servants must truthfully report to the authorities their new job when they decide to resign and they should not work for businesses that fall into their previous administrative jurisdiction within a given period of time.

Given the special nature of government posts, the document is widely viewed as a move to draw a red line for government employees who plan to leave public office for another job so they cannot wield any undue influence after they resign from their official positions.

The latest document is not aimed at blocking civil servants' "route of retreat" as some claim, but to make clear that those who resign from government posts do so under certain restrictions. Like anyone else, civil servants have the right to change jobs based on their own preferences, and their resignations should not be excessively interpreted as a means for them to try and evade investigation and punishment for any misdeeds.

However, the red line drawn for their new jobs is by no means redundant, given that the enormous public resources government officials usually hold means the residual influence they retain after their resignation can still be tapped by some enterprises to gain an upper hand over market competitors.

Thus the move is a timely and also necessary one by the authorities as it is a concrete measure to separate public power from government employees that resign and so prevent collusion between government and business.

The restrictive reemployment choices set by the authorities for resigning public servants are mainly aimed at making transparent their job choices and plugging the loopholes for potential corruption. It is also a reminder to resigning public employees that they should abandon the illusion they will be able make a fortune by wielding influence after leaving their posts.